

VOLUME VII NUMBER I

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THE GREATEST GENERATION MARCHES ON

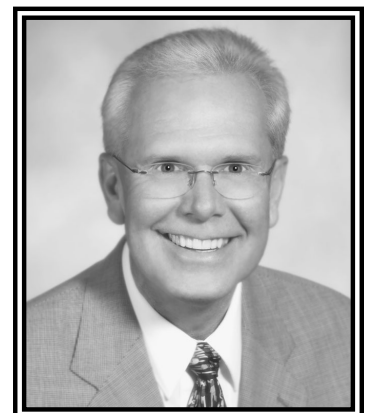
The kids are in their sixties. The eldest, who is the executor, leads me into the living room to meet the siblings. A stack of old newsletters sits on the coffee table. The mood is melancholy. We talk a bit and then begin a tour of the house. I write as fast as I can...kitchen updated in the seventies...older replacement windows. We make our way down the main hallway and I stop to look at the family photos. A young couple looks up from the black and white photo as they cut wedding cake in a small living room parlor. A soldier, who looks much older than his years, looks serenely into their nervous future. Children all dressed up in their Sunday best are lined up in a neat row of beautiful picture frames. Bathroom needs updating...carpet has need of replacement...clean and well cared for. One of the bedrooms has been a den for many years, and another is set up as a guest bedroom. The master bedroom is framed in frilly curtains, costume jewelry fills the top of the mirrored dresser, a modest mahogany bed stands in the center and the hardwood floors creak lovingly as I walk through this hallowed place. We go down into the basement and I admire the knotty pine walls of the finished basement. A lonely wet bar waits in the corner for the next party as do the dusty bottles of liquor long unopened. Copper plumbing, glass block windows, and 100 amp electric circuit breakers...good solid improvements. In a small corner next to the updated furnace is Dad's workroom. A photo of a large group of soldiers stands at attention on the wall right above a well worn vice that is anchored on the corner

of the workbench. Coffee cans full of screws, nails and what-not are stored on the walls. Every tool is snugly tucked into a handy storage place. On the ceiling is a home-made contraption made out of old baby food jars holding more nuts, bolts and screws. Dad needed a screw, he could reach up, unscrew the jar from its top and then re-screw it back in its place to wait for another job. We wander through the storage room and a grass-stained nine iron peeks out from the hand tooled leather golf bag. Hat boxes, an ironing board, board games and old National Geographic magazines are stored in this dark room. I look up and see a neatly pressed woolen green army uniform hanging on a wooden hanger, like it was ready to jump back into action anytime our Country needed help. We finish the tour of the house and I tell the siblings what I think the house is worth in today's market. This is only a number that matters to the buyers and their agents. I understand that this home, to the kids who grew up here, who celebrated so many birthdays and anniversary's, that holds most of the memories of their parents, is priceless. We schedule a time when I can come back to take pictures and measure the rooms. I head towards the door and thank them for the honor of allowing me to share so much of their family history and memories. As I walk down the sidewalk back to my car, I silently thank these folks, from a fast disappearing generation, for making the sacrifices they did to protect our way of life.

313-382-2300 - Office

313-673-9640 - Cell

website: www.lynnketelhut.com



LYNN KETELHUT
Broker/Owner

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TWENTY-FIVE

A quarter of a century. 25 wonderful years. 9,125 great days. 219,000 busy hours. 13,140,000 precious minutes. However you want to say it, that's how long I've been doing it. I can't tell you how many wonderful people I have met over this stretch of time but it must be thousands. Almost a thousand of you have trusted me with the most important business transaction of your lives. I have learned that it is not a business transaction at all, but a passing on of so many precious memories of your lifetime. And the paperwork! When I think of all the contracts, listing agreements, disclosures, addendums, deeds, closing papers, Thank You notes, etc., I swear I have generated my very own private landfill.



1986

So many of you turned out to be friends, not just clients. I have had the pleasure of watching those kids of yours grow up. Cheered for them at football games while watching the looks of pride in your faces, coached them in cross-country and listened to you urge them to go faster, refereed their track meets and generally pushed them towards success any-time I could. As time goes by I have even helped them through the process of buying their very own starter home.

As we go through the houses, I see you in them and imagine when you were young and just starting out, scared to death of investing \$50,000.00 on your first home. You had your dreams then, and now I get to be a small part of your kid's dreams too.

Some of you have paid me the ultimate compliment by mentioning me in your wills...list my house with Lynn. I tear up when I get the call from your kids, telling me it is now time to sell your home.

I have been humbled over and over again by your kind words and referrals to your friends. I am so thankful that you have chosen me to be your Realtor. That is how I make my living, but it is really more than that. We become best friends for the typical 3-6 month period of time it takes to list and sell or buy a home. You have baked me cookies, given me your precious homemade wine, slipped money in Thank You cards and written so many kind notes of Thanks. Your generosity has truly overwhelmed me.

Sadly, I have seen many of you move on, never to be seen again. I drive by your old house and can still see you there, smiling on the porch, waving as my Ford pulls out of the drive. I remember the little lunches we had and the little miniature Harley-Davidson replicas you would buy me for my birthdays. As long as I live, the ghost of your memory will be forever peaking out of that picture window, bonded with that brick and mortar building you called home for so many years. I cannot Thank You enough...

God willing, I'll get to keep jogging down this path with you, going to graduations, looking at your grandchildren's photos, listening to your kids' band recitals and enjoying so many parts of your lives. Someday the time will come for someone to sell my home. Are they in the business yet? Are they one of your kids? I remember years ago a young family who lived on Warwick. Their young son, maybe six years old, told me he wanted to be a Real Estate Salesman just like me. He told me he even had a slogan..."My name's Stu and I've got a house for you!" I looked up at his parents and smiled.

Since then, the Stuarts moved to a nearby City and I watched that little boy grow up. I have seen Eric at Track and Cross-Country meets over the years and still am watching him run in the U of M Club races. He will be a success in life because of his awesome attitude and drive. When that day finally comes to sell my home, I want someone like him.

ALLEN PARK - PLEASANT PAST, BRIGHT FUTURE

These two photos were taken in March 1958. The photographer would have been standing in the front yard of 14554 Belmont, which is the last house before the Lincoln Park border.

The photo on the right shows the vacant lot where the TIM TAM AND THE TURN-ONS apartments were built (and recently demolished). Beyond that lot, is the corner of Vine and Champaign and the block long residential business district.



In the photo on the left you can see the vacant lot where apartments and the Allen Park Middle School now stand. Note the little wooden toy train on the sidewalk. Ladies, remember wearing those bulky, but warm, leggings? Special Thanks to the Fucinari Family for lending me this great photo!

ALLEN PARK SALES RESULTS

YEAR	# SOLD	RANK	AVERAGE SALES PRICE	PRICE CHANGE
1986	288	20	\$52,511.00	
1987	374	3	\$56,350.00	+3,839
1988	314	16	\$62,769.00	+6,419
1989	297	19	\$68,729.00	+5,960
1990	283	21	\$72,837.00	+4,108
1991	260	23	\$75,510.00	+2,673
1992	269	22	\$81,338.00	+5,828
1993	313	17	\$77,532.00	-3,806
1994	362	4	\$85,144.00	+7,612
1995	341	10	\$93,253.00	+8,109
1996	316	14	\$99,450.00	+6,197
1997	353	8	\$102,502.00	+3,052
1998	380	1	\$111,502.00	+9,000
1999	356	7	\$120,529.00	+9,027
2000	375	2	\$130,205.00	+9,676
2001	315	15	\$139,070.00	+8,865
2002	319	13	\$141,765.00	+2,695
2003	359	5	\$146,068.00	+4,303
2004	357	6	\$148,732.00	+2,664
2005	330	12	\$150,392.00	+1,660
2006	251	24	\$138,681.00	-11,711
2007	246	25	\$127,360.00	-11,321
2008	310	18	\$103,691.00	-23,669
2009	349	9	\$73,680.00	-30,011
2010	341	10	\$69,993.00	-3,687

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313-382-2300 - Office
313-673-9640 - Cell
www.lynnketelhut.com
Park Avenue Realty, Inc.
6838 Park Avenue, Allen Park, MI 48101